

**Senate Bill 1041 Implementation
CalWORKs County Review Session Summary**

Plumas

August 30, 2016

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Welfare to Work Division
Todd R. Bland, Deputy Director

Plumas County
Senate Bill (SB) 1041 Implementation
CalWORKs County Review Session Summary

Introduction

Purpose of County Review Session

The purpose of the County Review Session is to obtain information regarding the county's ongoing progress in implementing program changes enacted by Senate Bill (SB) 1041 (Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012) and Assembly Bill (AB) 74 (Chapter 21, Statutes of 2013).

Scope of County Review Session

Specifically, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will determine the status of program changes related to SB 1041 and AB 74 implementation, including but not limited to:

- Welfare-To-Work (WTW) participation requirements;
- Post WTW 24-Month Time Clock services;
- Training methods provided to staff in order to implement SB 1041 changes;
- Data outcomes related to SB 1041 program changes;
- Family Stabilization (FS) Program;
- Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE) Program; and
- Implementation of Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT).

Goals of the County Review Session

The CDSS' goals of the Review Session are to ensure that SB 1041 and AB 74 were implemented correctly by each County Welfare Department (CWD), to gather and share promising practices amongst all CWDs throughout the state and to determine whether systematic or program issues relating to California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and the WTW program exist throughout the state. If any issues exist, they will be addressed by the CalWORKs Program Oversight Workgroup.

County Review Session General Information

A County Review Session was performed via teleconference call on Tuesday, August 30, 2016. The County Review Session team included three staff from the CDSS, WTW Division, CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch, along with Plumas County's Employment and Financial Services Division Program Manager and the Employment Services Supervisor. The County Review Session consisted of a kick-off discussion, county interview, and a final close-out.

The Plumas County Department of Social Services (PCDSS) provides services at one main office in Quincy, California. The PCDSS is composed of several social service divisions including, but not limited to:

- CalWORKs/CalFresh/Medi-Cal;
- In-Home Support Services;
- Child Protective Services;
- Adult Protective Services;
- County Medical Services Program;
- Foster Care; and
- Employment Career Center.

Additionally, client referrals are made to agencies providing support in behavioral health, mental health, and domestic abuse assistance as necessary.

Demographic Area and Economy

Plumas County is located at the northern edge of the Sierra Nevada mountain range in northeastern California. Based on the United States Census Bureau 2015 Population Estimates, Plumas County's population consists of approximately 18,400 residents. Geographically, more than three-quarters, 1.2 million acres, of Plumas County is National Forest land. The incredible array of forests and lakes offer a wide variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. Plumas County is one of California's smaller counties in population however this diverse population spans the employment spectrum from mill workers, US Forestry occupations, drilling employment, and cattle and farm ranching. The county seat is Quincy, and the only incorporated city is Portola. Plumas County's principal employment sectors include: recreation, timber, and the construction industries along with government employment. The Greenville Rancheria in Plumas County is a federally-recognized Rancheria for the Maidu Indians.

Implementation Strategies

SB 1041 implementation and transition were introduced to staff early in 2013 and the implementation strategy consisted of analyzing the All County Letters (ACLs) and All County Information Notices (ACINs) as they were issued by the CDSS. Review and discussions at unit meetings and staff training were provided locally, giving direction and guidance to assure a consistent understanding of the implementation.

Implementation strategies included county staff sending out the appropriate noticing, scheduling appointments, documenting changes and client updates through the consortium (C-IV) system. Subsequently, staff met individually with each Plumas County CalWORKs family at the Quincy Social Services office. By conducting the OCAT interview with clients, the county was better able to provide needed services and assess barriers early on. The county comprehensively explained program changes to clients.

Some of Plumas County's Key Successes Included:

- Plumas County's relationship with Feather River Community College (FRCC) is a success in the nursing program where students have obtained their Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN) certificates. The county partners with nursing homes in Quincy and Portola providing work experience and job opportunities upon graduation.
- Seasonal employment in Plumas County is available during the warm summer months. Music festivals, a golf resort, and other outdoor activities are popular seasonal employment.

Acknowledgements

The CDSS thanks the Plumas County Department of Social Services for participating in this teleconference session. The CDSS appreciates the open collaboration with CWD staff to ensure the continued success of the CalWORKs program.

Background and Data

Plumas County at-a-glance

Total Caseload.....	138
(Source: CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report CA 237 CW line Item 8a-August 2016)	
WTW Enrollees.....	24
(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line item 1-August 2016)	
Mandatory Participants (enrollees + sanctioned + non-compliance).....	50
(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line Items 1, 3A and 31-August 2016)	
Reengagement Plan Received.....	Yes
Beginning Date of Reengagement.....	April 1, 2013
Consortium System.....	C-IV

Data/Statistics available at time of teleconference call:

- Clients who had more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013, that have had their comprehensive discussion totaled: **100 percent**
- Clients who had less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013, that have had their comprehensive discussion totaled: **100 percent**
- Sanctions that were cured as a result of SB 1041: **Unknown**
- Former short-term young child exempt clients (Assembly Bill [AB] X4 4) that have been reengaged totaled: **10**
- WTW plans that have changed as a result of SB 1041 implementation totaled: **Zero**
- Clients that have used the new once in a lifetime young child exemption totaled: **105**

Summary of Documents provided by Plumas County for teleconference call:

- Plumas County Organization Chart: Document display of staff members within the Plumas County Office (Plumas County Department of Social Services & Public Guardian staff).
- AB 74 County Welfare Department FS Plan: The FS plan describes Plumas County FS program. (Ex: The date FS plan began, are types of services provided, how clients are informed, how clients are able to request participation, how participation determination is granted, etc.)

County Administrator and Caseworker Dialogue

The CDSS County Review Team used updated county administrator and caseworker interview tools following those released in ACIN I-42-13 regarding SB 1041 implementation. These tools were provided to and completed by a Plumas county administrator and a caseworker in advance of the County Review Teleconference. During the teleconference, the interview panel discussed responses to the interview tools in greater detail.

WTW 24-Month Time Clock Implementation and New WTW Participation Requirements

Transitioning Clients

Understanding of the WTW 24-month time clock has increased since its implementation. Staff at Plumas County includes two caseworkers and a supervisor. Meetings were held where All County Letters were reviewed and questions were answered so that staff could explain the CalWORKs' requirements and services. After some hesitation, staff began to accept and appreciate the flexibility of the WTW 24-month time clock and were better able to fully explain it to clients. Additional training continues.

Staff has developed a Job Readiness Workshop that will be implemented January 1, 2017. The workshop will focus on strategies and opportunities for clients in the current job market. Staff are now requiring more job search contacts during the first three weeks of Job Search.

Family Stabilization

Plumas County has submitted their FS Plan. However, no FS plans have been completed with clients. Plumas County has recently hired directors for both the Mental Health and the Drug and Alcohol departments and is in the process of restructuring/reorganizing their programs. All clients with a need are referred to these departments.

Expanded Subsidized Employment

Plumas County does not currently operate an expanded subsidized employment program.

OCAT Implementation

Plumas County fully implemented OCAT September 1, 2015. Case managers attended OCAT training provided by CDSS in June 2015 and utilized the training materials at the county level. Plumas County managers believe the OCAT process is a definite time commitment and continues to accommodate their clients as much as possible. Engaging clients early and subsequently referring them to behavioral health services, domestic abuse services, learning disability evaluation or any of the other services is the goal.

OCAT challenges mentioned by Plumas County were in regards to the shortage of county staffing to conduct interviews which is currently being addressed by county administration.

Child Care Services

Child care is contracted to licensed providers in Plumas County. CalWORKs clients are informed of this service at intake. FRCC also provides contracted child care on site. The Head Start program offers preschool experience for three to five year olds in Plumas County. Knowing child care is readily available allows clients to participate in their scheduled work activities.

Conclusion

Successes

Helping with the implementation of the SB 1041 were two strategies already in place in Plumas County.

- The first strategy is partnering with the community organization, Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD). This organization's goal is to connect job seekers and the business community in one location; providing services through education, training, employment, referral, and other supportive services into a readily available and a user-friendly network of resources. AFWD provides services in six counties: Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, and Sierra. AFWD contracts with the Plumas Business and Career Network to provide these services. The organization works with individuals to prepare them for the workforce, but also supports employers through employer-based training programs where local businesses are reimbursed for clients that are hired through the program.
- The second strategy is the county's relationship with FRCC where a CalWORKs office is located and works closely with the county to serve participating clients. The CalWORKs Program Coordinator at the FRCC is skilled and knowledgeable in working with the CalWORKs population. At the annual College and Career Day 2016, FRCC and AFWD collaborated in providing several hundred attendees information on college how-to hints, planning and preparation tips and techniques, scholarships, loan and educational

grant awareness, technical opportunities, vocational training, campus outreach, and employer recruitment efforts all related to employment.

Challenges

Staff turnover created challenges during SB 1041 implementation. Staffing shortages made it difficult to ensure that all components of the SB 1041 were being implemented.

Public transportation in Plumas County's rural communities is a challenge especially during the winter months. Bus service is available daily from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and during FRCC school session the bus runs until 9:00 p.m. Good Cause is given to clients that have travel time from their home to the assigned activity or employment exceeding two hours when using public transportation and they do not have access to private transportation.

Key Recommendations

The CDSS recommends that Plumas County continue working with FRCC regarding outreach and sharing available opportunities with CalWORKs participants and to continue exploring transportation alternatives to assist clients in remote areas of the county where access to services is limited. The CDSS suggests the county continue to develop and strengthen its efforts to engage clients in work available in the local labor market to increase the county's work participation rate. Plumas County should continue to collect and monitor data submitted through its C-IV system to the CDSS for the monthly CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Reports (CA 237 CW), and CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Reports for All (Other) Families and Two Parent Families (WTW 25/25A) for accuracy. The CDSS recommends Plumas County participate in County Advisory Team (CAT) meetings, as requested during the teleconference review session. Finally, the CDSS encourages Plumas County to take advantage of the FS program and funding to assist with more intensive case management and barrier removal for families.

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